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of a sewing machine bobbin, waves of four millimeters. We are prepared to find the agitation of the ultra-microscopic electrons generating the almost infinitely short waves of light.

They are grave matters that the author handles lightly. Eighteen brief lines picture Rutherford's magnetic detector (p. 185). Another twenty-five include both history and account of the Lodge coherer. No diagrams are used. He is a literary man, showing principles, not mechanisms. The grace of treatment reminds a reader of Miss Clerke, though he misses her fuller bits of biography.

Ultra-violet rays (p. 119) produce ozone from air. "Chemists regard the molecule of oxygen as formed by the marriage of two atoms of oxygen. This union, for the most part peaceful enough, is troubled by the addition of a third atom of oxygen; these three atoms of oxygen, in forced companionship, constitute ozone. Ozone is exasperated Oxygen." Svante Arrhenius is told in this connection that a space filled with ultra-violet light would be deadly to any spores that attempted the voyage between planets. We have long recognized in our atmosphere a shield from the incessant bombarding of meteoric grains. Here we learn of it as no less a shelter from the fatal ultra-violet rays.

A chapter of most timely interest is on the flight of birds. The most geographic chapters, principles of meteorology and forecasting the weather, have less of special interest. Guilbert's method of forecasting the paths of cyclones by studying the surface winds is a good feature, not only for its intrinsic interest but also for the admirable way in which it is described. At this point are inserted the only diagrams in the book. "Men say of meteorology, if it is a science, what is it good for? What does it do?" The author answers. "It gathers data and takes *means!* If it did not rain as predicted at least there were sixty-five chances in a hundred that it would!" The reference to the Gulf Stream is less happy.

Altogether it is a delightful volume of essays of astonishing clearness. If these notes on it lack unity, so does the book. But if its nine chapters are loosely connected, perhaps some of them attain a higher interest than can be long maintained.

MARK JEFFERSON.

The Evolution of Plants. By Dukinfield Henry Scott. 239 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1911. 75 cents. 7 x 5.

This is a book of the Home University Library of Modern Knowledge series and is advertised as "the story of the development of flowering plants, from the earliest geological times, unlocked from technical language." The book is not, however, a popular treatise. It opens with a statement of the Darwinian theory of natural selection as a cause of evolution and, with this as an assumption, proceeds to trace, through the geological history as it is recorded in the fossils, the course which plants in their evolution have followed. A selection of groups of plants is made for treatment, so that the scope of the book is limited to the fossil evidences of the flowering plants, the seed plants and the higher spore plants. By the use of these groups a somewhat logical connection is made with the first known plants of the paleontological series to the highest types of the present. The flowering plants are traced back to the highly organized Mesozoic seed plants, and the seed plants in turn are traced back to the spore plants of the Paleozoic period. No attempt is made to suppress the difficulties in the acceptance of the evidence and the book in its clear presentation of the present status makes a strong plea for further investigation.

ROBERT M. BROWN.